

## **Senate Bill No. 196**

### **CHAPTER 201**

An act to amend Section 798.40 of the Civil Code, and to amend Section 739.5 of the Public Utilities Code, relating to utility rates.

[Approved by Governor August 28, 2013. Filed with  
Secretary of State August 28, 2013.]

#### **LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

SB 196, Cannella. Utility rates: mobilehomes and apartment buildings.

Existing law requires a master-meter customer in a mobilehome park or apartment building, among other duties, to post in a conspicuous place, the prevailing residential utilities rate schedule as published by the serving utility.

This bill would instead require a master-meter customer to post in a conspicuous place, the specific current residential utility rate as published by the serving utility. The bill would authorize a master-meter customer in a mobilehome park, apartment building, or similar residential complex, as specified, to also post the Internet Web site address of the specific current residential utility rate schedule if it also provides a copy of the schedule, upon request, at no cost, and states in the posting that an individual user may request a copy of the rate schedule from the master-meter customer.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 798.40 of the Civil Code is amended to read:

798.40. (a) Where the management provides both master-meter and submeter service of utilities to a homeowner, for each billing period the cost of the charges for the period shall be separately stated along with the opening and closing readings for his or her meter. The management shall post, in a conspicuous place, the specific current residential utility rate schedule as published by the serving utility or the Internet Web site address of the specific current residential utility rate schedule. If the management elects to post the Internet Web site address where the schedule may be accessed, the management shall also: (1) provide a copy of the specific current residential utility rate schedule, upon request, at no cost; and (2) state in the posting that a homeowner may request a copy of the rate schedule from management.

(b) If a third-party billing agent or company prepares utility billing for the park, the management shall disclose on each resident's billing, the name, address, and telephone number of the billing agent or company.

SEC. 2. Section 739.5 of the Public Utilities Code is amended to read:

739.5. (a) The commission shall require that, whenever gas or electric service, or both, is provided by a master-meter customer to users who are tenants of a mobilehome park, apartment building, or similar residential complex, the master-meter customer shall charge each user of the service at the same rate that would be applicable if the user were receiving gas or electricity, or both, directly from the gas or electrical corporation. The commission shall require the corporation furnishing service to the master-meter customer to establish uniform rates for master-meter service at a level that will provide a sufficient differential to cover the reasonable average costs to master-meter customers of providing submeter service, except that these costs shall not exceed the average cost that the corporation would have incurred in providing comparable services directly to the users of the service.

(b) Every master-meter customer of a gas or electrical corporation subject to subdivision (a) who, on or after January 1, 1978, receives any rebate from the corporation shall distribute to, or credit to the account of, each current user served by the master-meter customer that portion of the rebate which the amount of gas or electricity, or both, consumed by the user during the last billing period bears to the total amount furnished by the corporation to the master-meter customer during that period.

(c) An electrical or gas corporation furnishing service to a master-meter customer shall furnish to each user of the service within a submetered system every public safety customer service which it provides beyond the meter to its other residential customers. The corporation shall furnish a list of those services to the master-meter customer who shall post the list in a conspicuous place accessible to all users. Every corporation shall provide these public safety customer services to each user of electrical or gas service under a submetered system without additional charge unless the corporation has included the average cost of these services in the rate differential provided to the master-meter customer on January 1, 1984, in which case the commission shall deduct the average cost of providing these public safety customer services when approving rate differentials for master-meter customers.

(d) Every master-meter customer is responsible for maintenance and repair of its submeter facilities beyond the master-meter, and nothing in this section requires an electrical or gas corporation to make repairs to or perform maintenance on the submeter system.

(e) Every master-meter customer shall provide an itemized billing of charges for electricity or gas, or both, to each individual user generally in accordance with the form and content of bills of the corporation to its residential customers, including, but not limited to, the opening and closing readings for the meter, and the identification of all rates and quantities attributable to each block in the applicable rate structure. The master-meter customer shall also post, in a conspicuous place, the applicable specific current residential gas or electrical rate schedule, as published by the corporation, or the corporation's Internet Web site address of the specific current residential gas or electrical rate schedule. If the master-meter

customer elects to post the Internet Web site address where the schedule may be accessed, the master-meter customer shall also: (1) provide a copy of the specific current residential gas or electrical rate schedule, upon request, at no cost; and (2) state in the posting that an individual user may request a copy of the rate schedule from the master-meter customer.

(f) The commission shall require that every electrical and gas corporation shall notify each master-meter customer of its responsibilities to its users under this section.

(g) The commission shall accept and respond to complaints concerning the requirements of this section through the consumer affairs branch, in addition to any other staff that the commission deems necessary to assist the complainant. In responding to the complaint, the commission shall consider the role that the office of the county sealer in the complainant's county of residence may have in helping to resolve the complaint and, where appropriate, coordinate with that office.

(h) Notwithstanding any other provision of law or decision of the commission, the commission shall not deny eligibility for the California Alternative Rates for Energy (CARE) program, created pursuant to Section 739.1, for a residential user of gas or electric service who is a submetered resident or tenant served by a master-meter customer on the basis that some residential units in the master-meter customer's mobilehome park, apartment building, or similar residential complex do not receive gas or electric service through a submetered system.

(i) For purposes of this section, "rebate" does not include the award of a monetary incentive under the California Solar Initiative adopted by the Public Utilities Commission in Decision 05-12-044 and Decision 06-01-024, as modified by Article 1 (commencing with Section 2851) of Chapter 9 of Part 2, for a solar energy system that provides electrical generation to a mobilehome park.